

Prevention Targeted Practice and Diversion

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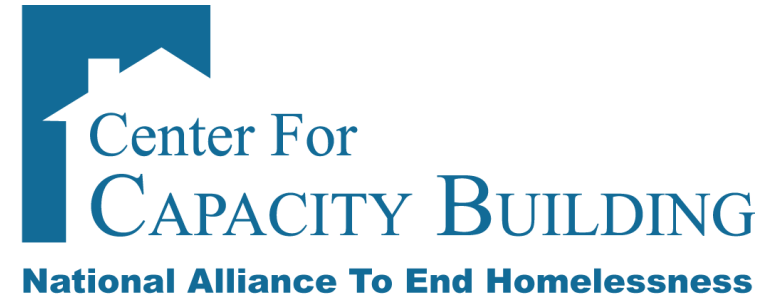


National Alliance to
END HOMELESSNESS

Agenda

- I. Introductions and Overview
- II. Terminology
- III. The Paradox of Prevention Targeting
- IV. Screening for Prevention and Diversion
- V. Interventions
- VI. Community Examples
- VII. Outcomes
- VIII. Next Steps





The National Alliance to End Homelessness is the leading national voice on the issue of homelessness. The Alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, effective policy solutions. The Alliance works collaboratively with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity, leading to stronger programs and policies that help communities achieve their goal of ending homelessness. The Alliance provides data and research to policymakers and elected officials in order to inform policy debates and educate the public and opinion leaders nationwide.

Working with a strong network of innovators, the National Alliance to End Homelessness identifies and evaluates hundreds of policy and program strategies and their impact on homelessness. The Alliance's Center for Capacity Building helps communities replicate and customize the best of those strategies. The Center focuses on strategies that are cost effective, data driven, and can be implemented at a scale that can significantly reduce homelessness.

Introductory Exercise

Organization

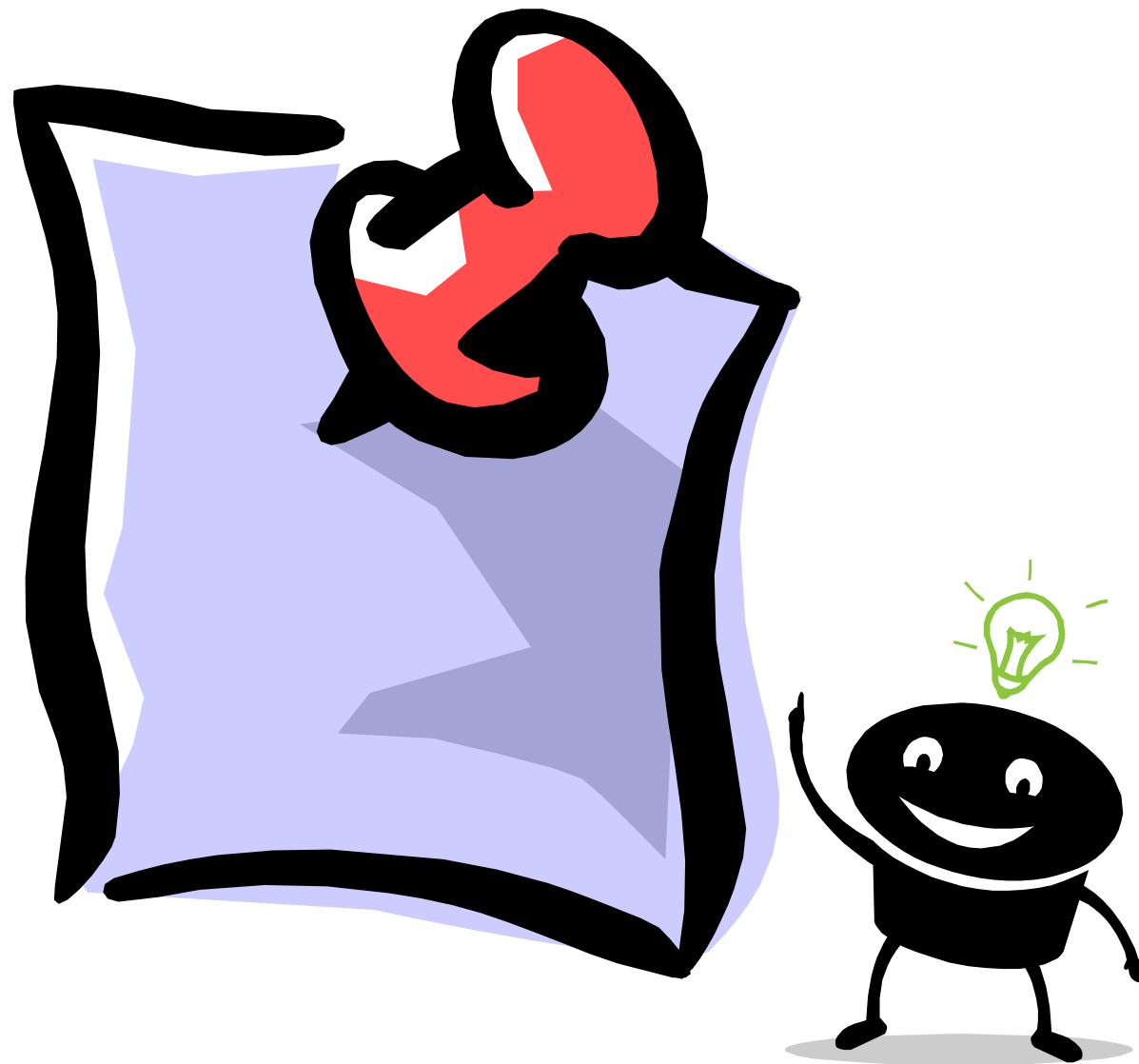
Role

“Prevention resources are most effective when used for households...”

“To measure the success of our prevention resources, we need to...”

“One concern/question I have about effective prevention is...”

AHA Moments



Terminology

Terminology

Housing Situation	Intervention Used	Services Provided
AT IMMINENT RISK OF LOSING HOUSING (precariously housed and not yet literally homeless)	PREVENTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing Search• Rental Subsidy• Other Financial Assistance• Utility Assistance• Case Management• Mediation• Connection to Mainstream Resources• Housing Search• Legal Services
REQUESTING SHELTER (at the “front door” or another program/system entry point seeking a shelter bed to stay)	DIVERSION with Prevention Resources	
IN SHELTER (homeless/in the homeless assistance system)	RAPID RE-HOUSING	

Prevention

The goal of effective prevention is to stabilize a household in their current housing situation *or* help them to move to a new housing situation without requiring they become literally homeless or pass through the shelter system first in order to receive help.

What is Diversion?

Diversion is using prevention resources at the front door of shelter to divert households from the shelter system

- ❑ Finding temporary alternate housing options outside of shelter when appropriate (safe)
- ❑ Prevents unnecessary shelter entry and the accompanying stress
- ❑ Requires service and assistance flexibility

Activity



Rock: It is difficult for me to imagine how this can be achieved



Light Bulb: This is/was an “a-ha!” moment for me



Brick Wall: This is an impossible challenge or the biggest obstacle to overcome



Heart: This really resonates with me
(predisposition to feeling this way already)



Jazz Hands: This is game changing for me,
represents a total paradigm shift

Your Response



Rock



AHA



Brick Wall



Heart



Jazz Hands

The Paradox of Prevention Targeting

Eviction Prevention vs. Homelessness Prevention

Which of these statements is true?

- People who become homeless are the same as other very low-income people.
- People who become homeless are different from other very low-income people.

Targeting

They both are!

People who become homeless **are** different from the general population and from other poor people:

- Households with one person (63% of homeless, 10% of US households)
- Mentally ill (16.3% of lowest income v. 28% of shelter residents)
- Veterans (15% v. 5% of poverty population)

BUT

There are many more people who share these characteristics who don't become homeless than do!

- Less than 0.5% of Veterans were homeless in 2012
- About 2% of people with mental illness were homeless on a given night in 2000

Lots of poor people Few who become homeless

Lots of people face a housing crisis
but few become homeless, even when
it looks like they will

SO

How do we determine the best use of
our current resources?

Activity

We currently determine who is eligible for prevention by....

We decided to use the determination because....

Why Target?

New York Study: 2012 “Understand Family Homelessness Implications

- “Prevention makes the most difference for those at highest risk. There is no level of risk that is too high.”
- Use data to refine targeting
- Develop an instrument to use high risk factors to screen in those w/most acute risk, screen out those w/fewer risk factors
- Serve smaller pool of families more intensively
- Lightened, almost minimal touches for other families

Why Target?

	Applied for Prevention assistance	Number who subsequently entered shelter (within 3 year period)	Percent of group
Households that received prevention assistance	243	12	4.9%

Why Target?

	Applied for Prevention assistance	Number who subsequently entered shelter (within 3 year period)	Percent of group
Households that received prevention assistance	243	12	4.9%
Households that were turned down for prevention assistance *	1,019	40	3.9%
Totals	1,262	52	4.1%

*Most common reason for being refused assistance was not having adequate ongoing income (i.e. *too poor*)

Why Target?

The AHA moment

- ❑ Without the data on those turned away we would assume we have a 5% homeless entry rate for those assisted: looks like we are doing pretty good at preventing homelessness!
- ❑ With the data we see we that we may not be effectively preventing homelessness; don't seem to be reaching the people who actually become homeless

Planning and Design for Prevention Targeting

Effectiveness and Efficiency

“Effective activities must be capable of stopping someone from becoming homeless or ending their homelessness quickly.

An efficient system **must target well, delivering its effective activities to people who are very likely to become homeless** (i.e. become literally homeless-enter a shelter bed) unless they receive help.” (Burt et al. 2007, p.xvii, italics in original)



How Do We Start Targeting?



- ❑ **Target** funds to households whose profiles closely match those of households in shelter
 - At imminent risk of literal homelessness
- ❑ Offer as little as is necessary to resolve crisis, then be prepared to provide additional assistance as needed
- ❑ Use an assessment tool to determine extent of crisis and risk factors
- ❑ Connect households with mainstream resources to improve chances at housing stabilization

How Do We Start Targeting?



PRIORITIZE

WHO IS AT IMMINENT RISK

- At closest point possible to separation from housing
 - Assistance directly impacts potential homelessness
 - Eviction notice by itself not a good determining factor

- Households with multiple risk factors
 - Use data
 - No income
 - Frequent moves; repeat episodes of homelessness, overcrowded or dangerous situations

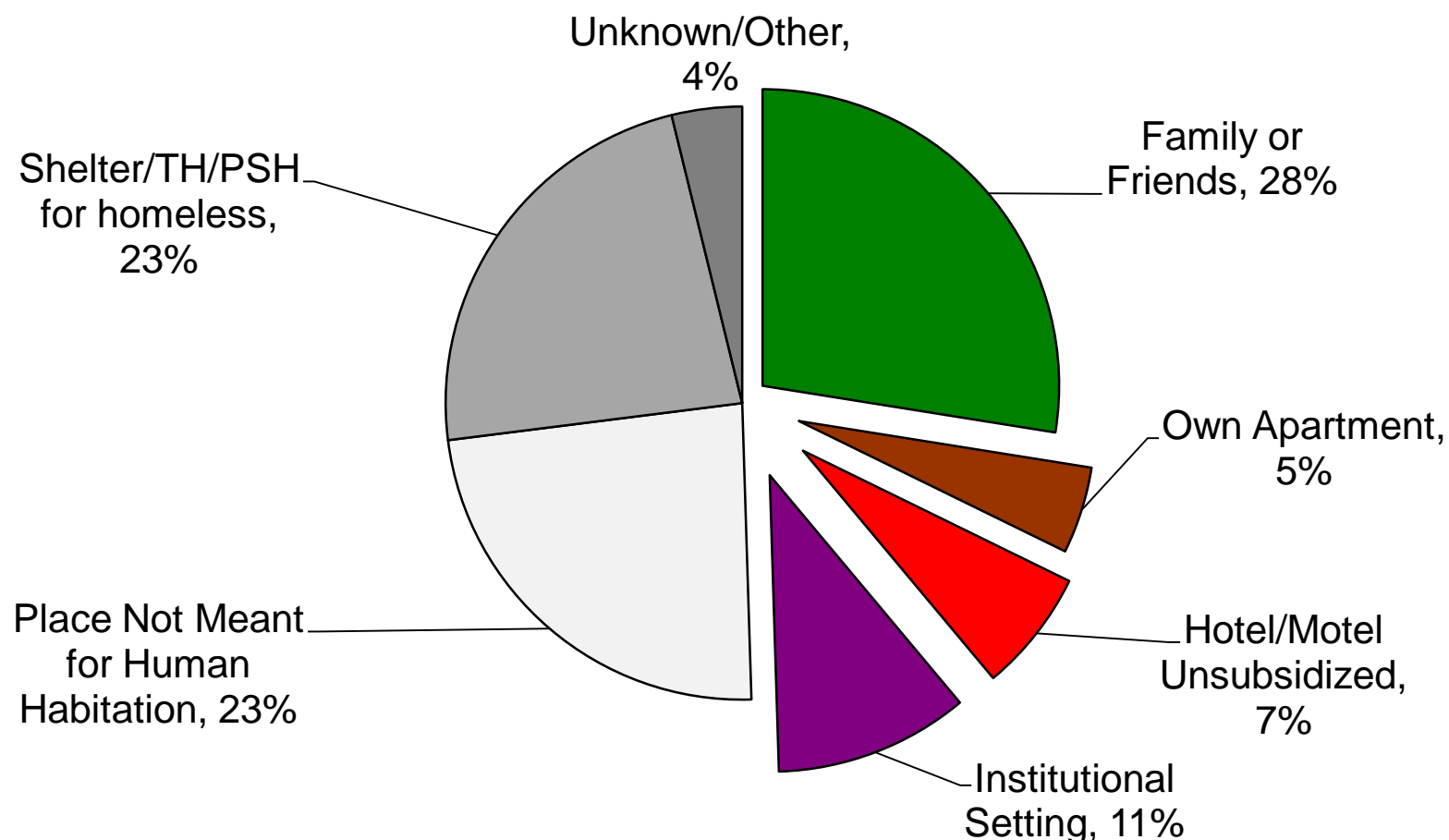
How Do We Start Targeting?



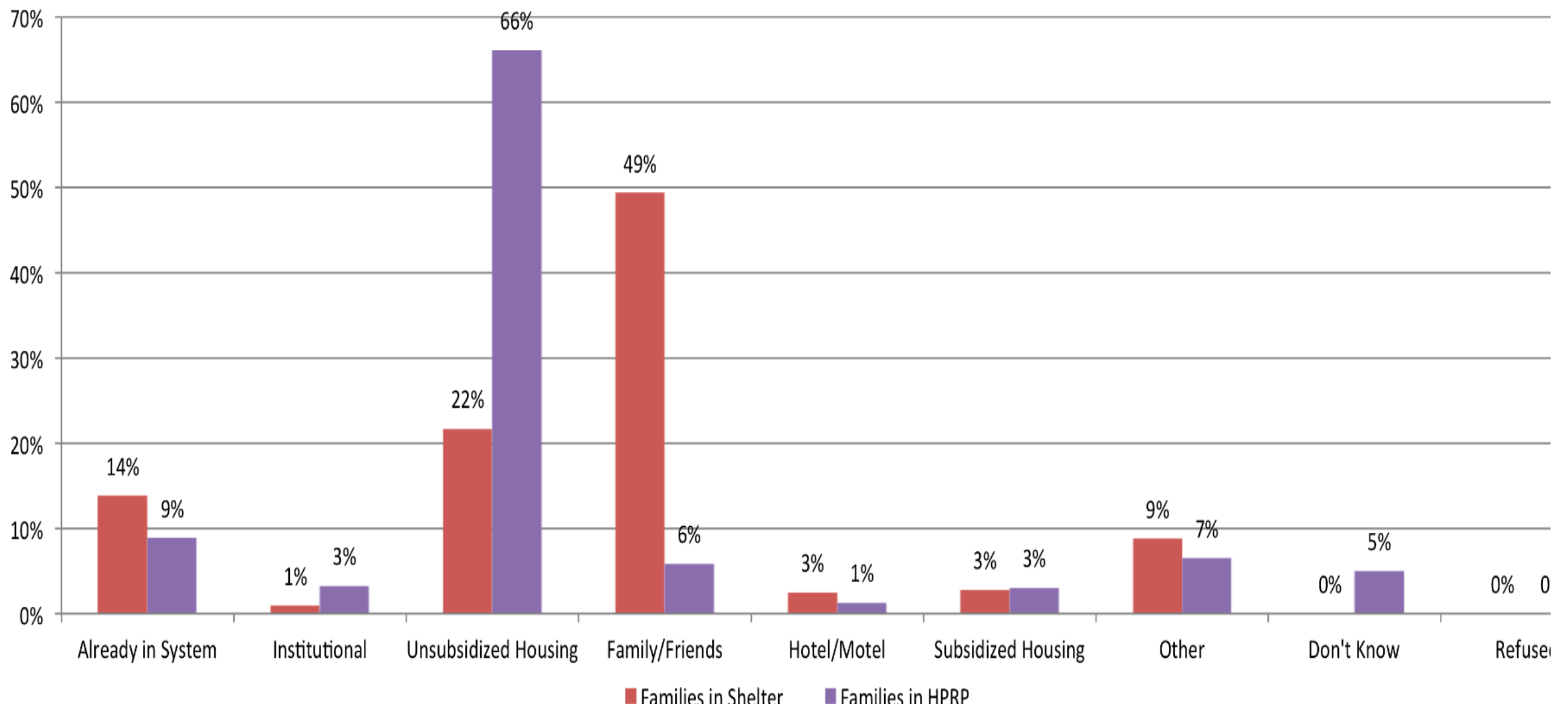
PRIORITIZE

- Target people who have the same profile as people who have entered the system in the past
- Use your HMIS data

**Where Sheltered People Spent Last 7 Days before Entry
(excludes Chronic)**



How Do We Start Targeting?



Break

Georgia Data

Prevention: Age	51% children 17 and under
Shelter: Age	18% children 17 and under
Prevention Age	12% adults 45 and over
Shelter Age	41% adults 45 and over
Prevention UH	84%
Shelter UH	7%
Prevention F&F	12%
Shelter F&F	29%

Screening for Prevention and Diversion

Connect Prevention Resources at the Front Door

Coordinated Assessment = Homeless Assistance Front Door where people come seeking shelter or other homeless assistance

- Sends Households to the intervention of best fit from the start
- Puts System-wide prevention and diversion resources at the front door
- Improves system efficiency by fostering more collaboration among providers and ensuring those with the highest need are prioritized
- Effectively uses prevention resources to reduce homelessness by diverting 25 – 30% of those requesting shelter

Prevention/Diversion Assessment Tool

- Diversion/Prevention Assessment should be administered to all households first
- Develop questions based on data of shelter populations
 - Use a scoring/rating system that prioritizes those with multiple risks that are most at risk of literal homelessness
 - Use shelter system entry for only persons who cannot be diverted/prevented
 - Identify appropriate prevention resource

Services and subsidy should be accessible immediately

Shelter Diversion Questions

YWCA Canton OH

- Where did you stay last night?
- Why do you have to leave the place you stayed at last night?
- What is your relationship to the person who gave you a place to stay last night?
- How long have you stayed at this location?
- Do you pay anything?

Shelter Diversion Questions

YWCA Canton OH cont...

- When do you have to leave?
- If we can't house you where will you stay tonight?
- Can you find a place for a couple of nights?
- What is your relationship to the person who is giving you a place to stay while you wait for a shelter or housing bed to open?

Shelter Diversion Questions

YWCA Canton OH cont...

- If the person who gave you a place to stay allows you to continue to stay over night, will that person put her/his own housing in jeopardy (violating lease)?
- Where do you have your personal belongings?
- Do you any income?
- How much money do you have (to determine if a motel or rent is possible)?

Interventions

Retaining Current Housing (even when living with others)

- Housing Advice
- Legal Services
- Landlord Advocacy and Intervention
- Credit Repair and Budgeting
- Employment Referrals
- Financial Assistance
- Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Relocating to Other Housing (even if it includes the current household)

- Assessing Housing Barrier
- Identifying Family Members or Friends
- Recruiting Landlords
- Weighing Choices
- Financial Assistance

Stabilization

(option for either scenerio)

- Home Visits
- Landlord-Tenant Communication
- Landlord-Tenant Rights & Responsibilities
- Referrals to Community Services and Mainstream Resources
- Identification and Connection to Natural Support Systems

Community Examples

Exercise

At Your Table:

Identify 3 prevention criteria that:

- Are measurable
- Are objective
- Indicate that somebody is likely to become homeless

Hennepin County MN

	Prevention	Shelter
Income below \$1,000	40%	94%
Paying more than 65% for housing	44%	94%
Head of Household under 22	1%	30%

Lancaster County PA

HPRP: Risk Assessment Tool Developed

- Used national data looking at risk factors
- Utilized the HMIS data that was available
- Met with all the community Emergency Shelter Providers to assess the tools and risk factors: what were we missing/were we on target

Imminent Risk of Literal Homelessness

- 15% of median income given priority
- No income requirement

Lancaster County PA

Screened 16,000 calls (2 year study)

- 470 households received financial assistance
- Length of assistance ranged from 1 month to 8 months
- Avg. assistance \$1,900 per household
- Different levels of service provision
- Less than 1% entered the homeless system
- 95% stayed in non subsidized housing

2009 – 2011 PIT Count: 28% decrease in homelessness

Cleveland Ohio

- Help persons determine if it's possible for them to stay anywhere else that's safe, other than shelter. This could be temporary or permanent.
- Assistance includes Greyhound bus tickets, food, grocery & gas station gift cards, or utility assistance that can be used to help persons stay with friends or family.
- Use ESG funds for back rent or 1st month's rent & deposit.
- Most persons are *doubled up* – staying *temporarily* with friends or family.

Cleveland Ohio

- When doubled up situation becomes unmanageable persons come to the shelter.
- If families can't stay where they are, assistance is provided to locate and assist with security and rent while they stay in the double up situation
- Even those options that were off-limits may become an option once it's known assistance is being provided to obtain permanent housing.

Outcomes and Evaluation

How Do We Measure Success

Develop performance standards to answer two questions:

1. Are we successfully reaching the would-be homeless households? (people that would have become homeless without some kind of intervention or assistance)
 - Continue to monitor data and modify criteria accordingly
 - Use a comparison group
2. Are we successfully preventing homeless episodes for households served
 - Track those receiving assistance over a period of time

How Do We Measure Success

Impact on Homelessness

- Is overall homelessness declining?
- Are the demographics of homelessness changing in our community?
- Are less households entering our shelter system?
- Are we seeing more available beds in our shelter system?
- Are we seeing less unsheltered homelessness?
 - PIT Count
 - AHAR Report
 - HMIS Data (check monthly)

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Gather data
- Develop Assessment Tool to identify those to target resources toward
- Develop written standards for prioritization of prevention resources
- Identify additional potential prevention funding sources (SSVF, EFNP, Faith Community)
- Develop evaluation process
- Get started

Next Steps

- Identify 3 strategies that you will take back to align your prevention assistance with best practice to reduce homelessness in your community
- What is the one thing you will do differently/implement in the next week when you return to your organization.

Debrief

Next Steps

July 2009

Homelessness Prevention: Creating Programs that Work



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